

AN APPALLING DISASTER.

Terrific Explosion In the Cambria Steel Co.'s Mine at Johnstown, Pa.

SEVERAL HUNDRED MINERS ENTOMBED.

Heroic Efforts Made to Reach the Victims—The Few Survivors Who Escaped From the Mine Describe the Conditions as Frightful—A Number of Miraculous Escapes.

Johnstown, Pa., July 10.—Johnstown has again been visited by an appalling disaster, only less frightful than the awful calamity of May 31, 1889, in cost of life. A terrible explosion took place in the Cambria Steel Co. rolling mill mine under Westmont hill this afternoon, and how many are dead it may take several days to fully determine. That it is a long and shocking list is certain, and it may reach two hundred or more men.

About six hundred men were at work when the explosion occurred.

It was nearly an hour after the explosion before any general knowledge of what had happened got abroad. Men who came from the mines told the terrible news, and soon it spread like wildfire all over the city. In scores of homes there were the most pathetic scenes. Mothers, wives, daughters, sons and relatives were frantic with grief, and hundreds rushed to the scene.

Heroic Efforts at Rescue.

At the opening across the river from the point, the Cambria Iron Co. police, with several assistants stood guard, permitting no one to enter the mine, from which noxious gases were coming. It was nearly four o'clock when all hope of sending rescue parties from the Westmont opening was abandoned. Two men who had escaped from the mine—Richard Bennett and John Meyers—went back two miles to see what assistance could be rendered, but the frightful damp drove them back, and they fell prostrate when they finally, after a desperate struggle, reached the outside. Two doctors gave them assistance, and after working with them half an hour restored them. Their story of the scenes in the mine made it clear that the rescue work could not proceed from the Westmont opening, and then hasty preparations were made to begin that sad mission at the Mill creek entrance. Soon after the news of the explosion reached the Cambria officials, Mining Engineer Moore and one of his assistants, A. C. Prosser, made an attempt to enter the mine. They were followed by Mine Superintendent Robinson, but the deadly gases stopped their progress and they were compelled to return to the surface.

Mine Foreman Rodgers, his assistant, William Blumh, and Fire Bosses John Whitney, John Retallick and John Thomas, were overcome by the gases, and it is feared they perished in an heroic effort to rescue the miners. A son of Harry Rodgers then tried to reach his father, but he was quickly overcome by the deadly gases and was carried out unconscious.

William Stillech spent several hours at the Mill Creek opening. He said that he believed as many as 450 men were still in the mine. It was his opinion, from all he could glean, that not more than 150 men had come out.

Cause of the Explosion.

The mining officials of the Cambria company stated the explosion was one of fire damp. The few survivors who have escaped from the depths of the mine describe the conditions to be frightful in their nature. Outside of the Klondike the mines are safe and uninjured. Within the fatal limits of the mine the havoc wrought is such as beggars description. Solid walls of masonry three feet through were torn down as though barriers of paper. The roofs of the mine were demolished, and not a door remains standing. In the face of these difficulties even the most heroic efforts towards rescue may well seem hopeless.

Some Miraculous Escapes.

The stories of the men who escaped are miraculous. Tom Foster, an assistant foreman in the Klondike mine, was among the first to emerge from the Mill creek shaft. Shortly after Powell Griffith, a fire boss came up. Foster was in his office when the explosion occurred. His first thought was for the safety of the men under his charge. With the help of Foreman Roberts an effort was made to replace a few of the shattered doors. All the while the fire damp was closing around them. Through galleries into headings, warning and helping, the two men went. Roberts fell, but Foster staggered on, whether he hardly knew. In the midst of the danger met Powell Griffith, a fire boss. He had faced what seemed certain

death, in an effort to save his men.

Forward they went, dragging a comrade into a place of safety here, giving a word of warning there, until human endurance could stand the strain no longer. Exhausted they staggered into a heading, where the fire damp had not entered. There they rested for a moment and then plunged forward—where, they did not know—until finally they wandered into a water level and through it reached a place of safety.

John Whitney, who was beyond the dip where the explosion took place said: "I was at the heading one-half mile from the explosion. Several dozen were overcome by the damp of gas, and I had all I could do to escape. It was terrible. After the explosion we went back to rescue the less fortunate and nearly lost our own lives. We got one man and saved his life. I did not see my father, who was struggling to get out. I don't think many outside of the drivers escaped."

Getting Out the Dead.

Johnstown, Pa., July 10.—At 11:25 the first four victims were brought to the surface from the Klondike section.

Dr. John R. Lowland, of this city, who came up with the men, said he passed 25 dead bodies, some of them in sitting postures.

The armory of company H, Fifth regiment, N. G. P., will be turned into a charnel house.

After a conference to-night it was announced that the dead miners would be brought to the armory tomorrow. Planks have been laid on chairs in the armory, and the removal of bodies will begin at an early hour in the morning.

The ambulances of all the undertakers in the city are at Mill creek in readiness to begin the transfer of bodies.

The number of dead is now placed at 125.

PROBABLE IDENTIFICATION.

The Persons Found Murdered Near Prudence, Okla., Thought to Be A. C. Stone and Family.

Joplin, Mo., July 11.—The bodies of the four persons found murdered near Prudence, Okla., on Monday, are believed to be those of A. C. Stone, wife and two children, of Baxter Springs, Kas. J. W. Stone, a brother of the dead man, who is in Joplin, expresses this opinion, after being in telephonic communication with the sheriff at Enid, Okla. Mr. Stone states that his brother left Baxter Springs on June 6 for Oklahoma, going overland, and that he was in the vicinity of Prudence at the time the murders are supposed to have been committed. He had been in the hay business at Baxter Springs, and had gone to Oklahoma seeking employment as a harvest hand. He carried but little money, but had a valuable outfit. Stone was 39 years old, and his wife 23. The children were a girl, aged 8, and a boy, aged 5. These descriptions fit those sent from Prudence.

SHOT BY A STEAMBOAT MATE.

Two Long-Haired Medicine Men Attempt to Run a River Boat and Are Promptly Killed.

Davenport, Ia., July 10.—Christopher Leonidas and his son, long-haired medicine men, wearing sharpshooters' medals and heavily armed, boarded the Diamond Jo steamboat Dubuque, at Rock Island, Ill., Thursday, and attempted to take possession. Mate Dan Green shot and killed both when the boat was opposite Davenport. The bodies were taken off here. The boat officers were held.

The coroner's jury acquitted Green on the ground of self-defense.

FIVE FIREMEN KILLED.

Disastrous Results of a Fire—Two Warehouses in Toronto, Ont.—The Victims.

Toronto, Ont., July 11.—Five firemen were killed in a disastrous fire which started in the building occupied by P. McIntosh & Sons, and spread to the wholesale hay and straw warehouses of Gadsby & McCann. These establishments were destroyed. David See, Harry Clarke, Adam Kerr, Walter Collard and Russell, firemen, were buried by a brick wall, which fell upon them. They were dead when extricated.

QUEEN'S NARROW ESCAPE.

Queen Alexandra Barely Missed an Accident in Which a Canadian Woman Was Killed.

London, July 11.—Shortly after Queen Alexandra passed on her way to open the coronation bazaar, the decorations across Langham place, heavy and sodden with rain, were caught in a squall of wind and fell, dragging down a mass of coping from the top of All Souls' church. Miss Streathy, believed to be a Canadian, was killed and several persons were injured.

THE ILL-FATED MINE.

Total Deaths Now Believed to Be One Hundred and Fourteen—Sunday Was Given Over to Funerals.

Johnstown, Pa., July 13.—After a consultation this evening with the four state mine inspectors summoned here to make a thorough inspection of the rolling mill mine of the Cambria Steel Co., James E. Roderick, chief of the state bureau of mining inspection, dictated a notice to General Manager C. S. Price, of the Cambria company, granting formal permission to resume operations in all sections of the mine except the Klondike in the morning. The Klondike workings will likely be closed for several days until perfect security is assured through the bratticing of openings and repairs necessitated by the explosion.

Two more deaths of rescued victims have occurred since last night. Early this morning John Sehr and Yasante Sibolia died at the Cambria general hospital. These deaths raise the total fatalities to 144, although the company records have it one less. Much confusion has attended the compilation of the record.

Mine Superintendent G. T. Robinson this evening said: "I would not like to assert that there are no more bodies in the mine, but I don't think there are. There may be a few."

It is generally regarded as certain that the full extent of the disaster is now known.

Most interest centered to-day in the funeral obsequies which were scattered throughout the city. The black cloud of mourning was heaviest over Cambria City, where the foreign population dwells. Scenes of Saturday in this section were repeated, but only with sterner force. It was a grim fete day, in which the number of participants were augmented by the crowds brought in. The outsiders came from towns within a radius of fifty miles or more. These visitors spread themselves out in squares and took in the various points of interest associated with the tragedy. To the foot of the tramway leading up to the main pit mouth all paid a visit. Hundreds gathered there at a time in the vain hope of seeing newly-discovered bodies brought forth to gratify their curious gaze.

All the churches of Johnstown paid more or less attention in their morning services to the disaster. Collections were lifted in many for the benefit of the bereft families of the poorer victims. Special masses were said in the Catholic churches.

The afternoon was devoted to funerals. Incessantly processions moved out and along Chestnut street towards the Catholic cemeteries near Morrellville.

The funeral of Mike Sabot, one of the conspicuous self-sacrificing heroes of the disaster, took place from St. Mary's German Catholic church. The large church was packed with friends and those who did not know the little dead fellow, but who had heard the noble story of his achievement which brought him glory, but only at the expense of his life. Sabot was about seventeen years old. He was a trapper and knew the mine like a book. He was out at the mouth of one of the headings when the explosion came. He found himself unscathed, and immediately rushed to the falling men beyond him. He had dragged three into a working that the after-damp had not reached and to his help they owe their lives to-day.

Back he plunged into the mine heading after more bodies. Faintness overcame him and he toppled over and died.

A CRISIS MAY BE NEAR.

The Coal Stickers Are Awaiting the Action of the Convention to Be Held at Indianapolis.

Wilkesbarre, Pa., July 13.—The tenth week of the great anthracite miners' strike may witness the crisis. Everything now depends upon the national convention which meets at Indianapolis on Thursday. If the convention votes solid support to the hard coal miners now on strike the conflict with the operators may be prolonged indefinitely. On the other hand, should substantial support not be forthcoming, it may have a discouraging effect on the strikers, and the operators, taking advantage of it, may attempt to resume operations at some of the collieries. This is the consensus of opinion as expressed in operators' and strike circles. No effort will be made by any of the large coal companies to start up any of their mines this week. Indianapolis must speak first before any move is made in that direction.

Many of the local assemblies of United Mine Workers of District No. 1 held meetings to-day to give final instructions to their delegates who will represent them in the national convention. Just what the instructions are is not known. It is expected, however, that all the delegates from the anthracite region will vote as a unit in the convention.

Sheriff Jacobs reports that the whole region is unusually quiet.

BEEF TRUST INQUIRY.

Interesting Facts Developed by the Investigations Made by Agents of Department of Justice.

Washington, July 14.—Investigations that have been made by the agents of the department of justice in connection with the litigation against the beef trust have developed some very interesting facts concerning the meat question and the probabilities for reduced prices of beef and other meat products.

Since the injunction cases were commenced against the beef trust some time ago the department of justice has been making very extended inquiry into the entire subject of meat production, including the cost of cattle on the ranges, the price of feed, and all of the elements of expense that enter into the cost of meat foodstuffs as they come to the American table. The purpose of the investigation was solely to equip the attorneys for the government with means of meeting any arguments that might be offered by the trust in explanation of the exorbitant prices that are being charged for meat.

In making the inquiry the agents of the department have discovered a number of facts which seem to warrant the prediction that, whatever may be the outcome of the litigation against the beef combine, there will be no marked decrease in the price of beef for consumption for a year at least. It has been established to the complete satisfaction of the department that the prices of beef were increased by the beef combine without any justification, and that enormous profits were made through arbitrary advance of prices, without any increased cost of securing the beef or preparing it for the markets. But it is also claimed, as a result of investigation, that conditions are now such that cattle of all kinds will command a stiff price in the markets for the next year at least, and that while the prices will and can be reduced considerably, there will be no return to the prices that ruled a couple of years ago. This opinion of the department of justice agents is based upon the reports received from St. Louis, Kansas City, Omaha and Chicago and from the range countries and feeding places tributary to those live stock market centers. These reports show that last year the cattle-men of the west stripped their ranges and sold their stock at a sacrifice on account of threatened drought in the stock belt.

About a year ago, realizing that grass was not making its usual growth and that the water supply was running low and the corn crop threatened, farmers and live stock men rushed their stock to market, selling it at a heavy sacrifice in many instances, in order to avoid the necessity of buying feed at high prices. The beef combine took due advantage of this situation. With every market in the country overstocked, the prices sagged low, and the packers bought a mammoth supply of stock at very low prices. These were fattened and killed and added to the stock of beef on hand in the cold-storage warehouses. Owing to the high price of corn and other feed for stock, the small cattle-men did not buy the usual stock of cattle to feed, and every beef that was marketable was disposed of. The result is to-day that the supply of marketable cattle is small, and will remain so until the corn crop is gathered. With the present ruling high price of corn the prospect is against any large use of it for feeding purposes. The range-fed cattle, known as the "grassers," are coming into western markets in smaller numbers than usual, and every indication points to continued high prices for beef.

FRIARS MUST GO.

Administration Will Take the Ground that the Friars Must Be Eliminated From Philipinas.

Oyster Bay, N. Y., July 14.—It is understood that a note is being drafted in response to that transmitted by the pope through Gov. Taft to the administration. As Gov. Taft stated in the negotiations, it is likely that the reply of this government will be sent to the vatican authorities through him. Ample assurance is given that the United States will take strong ground in support of the contention that the friars must be eliminated from the Philipinas equator. It is said that no official statement of any phase of the situation will be made public until the negotiations with the vatican have been concluded and that then the announcement will be made from Washington.

Miss Alice Roosevelt arrived here this evening shortly before six o'clock. She has been enjoying a brief sojourn at Camp Santini, on Newcomb lake, in the Adirondacks, a few miles from the starting point of Mr. Roosevelt when he left the North Woods for Buffalo after the death of President McKinley.

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